

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

collecting process information relating to processing content from an indicator on a device ~~devices~~ used in a washing, disinfection ~~and/or~~ sterilization facility via a computer network;

~~to subsequently store~~ storing the information electronically to allow for the generation of reports ~~and/or~~ displays based on the received information; and

~~thus~~ providing a network client with access via the computer network.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising ~~the ability to transmit~~ transmitting collected process information from the device ~~devices~~ used in a the disinfection ~~and/or~~ sterilization facility via a the computer network; to subsequently store electronically to allow for the generation of reports ~~and/or~~ displays based on the received information; and ~~thus~~ providing a the network client with access via the computer network.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a the network client ~~may be~~ is associated with a reviewer that analyzes that data to evaluate compliance with washing, disinfection ~~and/or~~ sterilization processing standards.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the network client ~~could be~~ includes authorized facility staff members, manufacture support groups, regulatory agency or an audit organization.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of providing a cassette for storing said device, said cassette having an electronically readable

cassette tag, storing information regarding said device on said cassette tag, and placing said device in said cassette.

7. (New) The method according to claim 6 wherein said step of storing information regarding said device comprises optically scanning a code on said device.

8. (New) The method according to claim 6 wherein said step of storing information regarding said device comprises electronically reading an instrument tag on said instrument.

9. (New) The method of claim 6 further comprising establishing a link between the plurality of contact points to allow retrieval of the stored information.

10. (New) The method of claim 6, wherein the step of collecting includes identifying an instrument as the device.

11. (New) A method according to claim 1 further comprising:

electronically reading status information from an indicator at a plurality of contact points relating to a sterilization or disinfection condition of an instrument; and storing the information electronically on one or more RFID tags.

12. (New) An RFID tag configured to receive, record, store and make available for subsequent electronic transmission information relating to an instrument to be washed, disinfected or sterilized or to a container configured to receive said instrument.

13. (New) An RFID tag according to claim 12 wherein said information comprises at least one of the following:

the model number of said instrument or container,

the lot number of said instrument or container,

the serial number of said instrument or container,

the type of process to which said instrument or container has been subjected,

the date and time of one or more processes to which said instrument or container has been subjected,

the status of a process to which said instrument or said container is subjected during such process,

the number of processes to which said instrument or container has been subjected,

the identify of an operator initiating or responsible for a sterilizing or disinfecting process to which said instrument or container has been subjected,

the service history, owner, or location of said container,

the revision number of said instrument or container,

the part number of said instrument or container,

the reorder number of said instrument or container,

the expected life of said instrument or container,

the date of manufacture of said instrument or container,

the date of installation of said instrument or container,

the date of first use of said instrument or container, or

the electronic product code (EPC) of said instrument or container.

14. (New) A tag according to claim 12 in combination with said container for a plurality of said instruments.

15. (New) A tag according to claim 12 in combination with said container comprising:

a tray for receiving said plurality of instruments to be washed, sterilized or disinfected,

a lid for covering said tray and forming an enclosure, and

a seal between said tray and lid for sealing said enclosure and having at least a portion of said tag embedded therein.

16. (New) A tag according to claim 12 in combination with a seal configured to fit between a tray and a lid of said container.

17. (New) A tag according to claim 16 at least partially embedded in said seal.

18. (New) A tag according to claim 17 wherein said tag is capable of accumulating the number of washing, sterilizing or disinfecting procedures in which said seal has been used.

19. (New) A tag according to claim 12 in combination with apparatus for sensing and indicating a washing, sterilization or disinfection process to which an instrument has been subjected comprising:

- a power supply,
- a switch for determining when a predetermined temperature and/or pressure condition has been reached and for activating said power supply in response thereto,
- a sensor for detecting sterilization or disinfection temperature and/or pressure conditions at a contact point, and
- a central processing unit for processing the information from the sensors and writing said information to said RFID tag for subsequent retrieval.